

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this teaching series, you will have an opportunity to learn to know the Bible. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. Today we will learn how the book of EXODUS came into being, its character as history, its division into two main parts and its main contents. We will also learn about the Messiah in the book of Exodus.

### **POINT 1. THE ORIGIN OF EXODUS.**

#### **First. The name of the book.**

In the Hebrew Bible, the first five books in the Old Testament are called by their first words. So in Hebrew, this book is called “and these are the names”. In the oldest translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, it is called “Exodus” or *departure*, referring to the departure from Egypt. However, this name only describes the first part of the book. The second part of the book describes God’s covenant at Sinai.

#### **Second. The writer, the date and the place of writing.**

It is clear that for the greatest part of the book, Moses himself was the author. In Exodus 17:14 and the Lord commanded Moses to write things down so that they may be remembered. In Numbers 33:2 the Lord commanded Moses to record the stages of their journey. This shows that Moses kept a journal of the important events in the history of Israel. In Exodus 24:4,7 we read that Moses wrote down everything the Lord had said to them on Mount Sinai and called this *the Book of the Covenant*. This book contained at least Exodus 20:22 to 23:33. In Exodus 34:27-28 we read that the Lord commanded Moses to write down the words of the renewal of the covenant after Israel had broken the covenant by making a golden calf. For the facts contained in Exodus 1:1 - 2:10, Moses must have relied on what his mother, sister and others had told him. In Exodus 15:1-21 a song of Moses has been recorded. Thus, according to the facts in Exodus, Moses was the writer of the historical and legal parts of the book. *The historical part* forms the backbone of not only the book of Exodus, but of all the first five books in the Bible. *The legal and poetical parts* originally existed separately, but were soon incorporated into the historical framework of these books by an editor. A verse like Exodus 11:3 and the additions of the family records of Reuben, Simeon and Levi in Exodus 6:13-27 show that a later writer edited the writings of Moses into its present form.

Moses wrote most of Exodus around the time of the departure from Egypt in 1445 B.C. and in the desert of Sinai. This time may be calculated as follows. The reign of king Solomon can be calculated from Assyrian rock inscriptions to be from 970-930 B.C. And according to 1 Kings 6:1, Israel departed from Egypt 480 years before the 4<sup>th</sup> year of king Solomon’s reign, that is, in 1445 B.C. Thus the Pharaoh, who made Israel slaves and oppressed them with forced labour (1:8-14), was Thutmose III. He ruled from 1501-1447 B.C. The princess, who raised Moses, was probably queen Hatshepsut, who lived from 1501 - 1479 B.C. The following king, Pharaoh, Amenophis II, ruled Egypt from 1447 - 1421 B.C. He was a very cruel slave driver (5:6-9) and the departure from Egypt took place under him.

#### **Three. The character of the book.**

As we have said before, Moses was the writer of Exodus and his intention was clearly to record the important events in the history of Israel during his lifetime as well as the words of God spoken to him and Israel. However, it is remarkable that while nothing is said about what happened to Israel for three centuries between the arrival of Jacob and his family in Egypt and the birth of Moses, the next 120 years in Egypt and Sinai are described in detail. This proves that the Bible is not simply a description of human history, but a description of *the history of God’s deeds in the midst of his people and the record of God’s words during that time*. The history in the Bible is God’s salvation history. The history in the Bible has God at its centre!

### **POINT 2. THE DIVISION OF EXODUS.**

#### **First. The main goal and theme of Exodus.**

The first part of Exodus consists of Exodus 1:1 to 15:21 and ends with the song of Moses and Israel about God’s victory. It describes how God led Israel out of Egypt in a miraculous way.

The second part of Exodus consists of Exodus 15:22 - 40:38. It describes how God made a covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai. The two main parts of Exodus is thus chapters 1-15 containing *the exodus* and chapters 15-40 containing *the covenant*.

As a whole the book of Exodus is a revelation of how God adopts the nation that descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as his own people. In Exodus 6:6-8 God says, “I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgement. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord

your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the Lord.” The goal and theme of Exodus is to describe the *rescue or salvation* of Israel from the house of slavery and their *adoption or acceptance* as God’s people.

**Second. The first part of Exodus consists of Exodus 1:1 to 15:21: the exodus.**

It describes how God led Israel out of Egypt in a miraculous way. The first part may be divided into four sections as follows:

Section one. Exodus chapters 1 to 4 describes the life of Moses.

Exodus 1 reminds the readers of the arrival of Jacob and his family in Egypt about 300 years before, how Israel multiplied, became a great nation and was forced into slave labour by another Pharaoh, who did not remember Joseph’s service to Egypt.

Exodus 2 describes the early life of Moses, his birth, his rescue by Pharaoh’s daughter, and later his flight to Midian in northern Arabia.

Exodus 3:1 to 4:17 describes how God appeared to Moses in the burning bush and called him to rescue Israel.

Exodus 4:18-31 describes how Moses and Aaron met the elders of Israel.

Section two. Exodus 5:1 - 7:13 describes the confrontation with Pharaoh and Pharaoh hardening his heart.

Moses and Aaron announced God’s command to Pharaoh, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel says, ‘Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert’.” Pharaoh refused and made his oppression of Israel even harder. God encouraged Moses by giving the ability to perform the miracle of turning his staff into a snake (7:8-9). To this section was added the family record of Moses and Aaron (6:13-27).

Section three. Exodus 7:14 to 12:30 describes the ten plagues that God sent over Egypt.

To this section was added the institution of the Passover festival (12:1-28). This was written in Egypt before Moses wrote Exodus in the desert of Sinai.

Section four. Exodus 12:31 to 15:21 describes the departure from Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea.

To this section was added the legal parts about the Passover restrictions and the consecration of the firstborn (12:43 - 13:16) and the song of victory (15:21).

**Third. The second part of Exodus consists of Exodus 15:22 - 40:38: the covenant.**

It describes how God made a covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai. This part may be divided into five sections as follows:

Section one. Exodus 15:22 to 18:27, describes God’s care for Israel on their journey through the desert before they came to mount Sinai.

It describes the grumbling of the Israelites and the blessings from God, especially how God cared for their water and their food in the desert. It also describes how God gave Israel victory in war against the Amalekites. Finally it describes how Moses accepted the advice of his father-in-law, Jethro, and re-organised the administration of justice in Israel.

Section two. Exodus chapters 19 to 23 describes God’s covenant with Israel at Sinai.

On the same mountain where God appeared to Moses the first time, Moses heard God speaking to him again. There God revealed to Moses *the Ten Commandments*. There Israel realised their need of a mediator. They desired that only Moses should approach God on their behalf and speak God’s words to them. In Exodus 20:22 to 23:33 God reveals various laws to Israel, which were recorded in *the Book of the Covenant* (24:4,7).

Section three. Exodus 24:1 to 31:18, describes God’s instructions concerning the tabernacle.

During forty days and nights on Mount Sinai, God revealed to Moses the various prescriptions concerning the making of the tabernacle. While Moses himself recorded God’s instructions concerning the tabernacle, God himself recorded the Ten Commandments on two stone tables.

Section four. Exodus 32:1 to 34:35, describes God’s renewal of his covenant with Israel.

Israel had broken the covenant with the Lord by making an idol of a golden calf. When Moses descended from the mountain and saw what Israel was doing, he broke the two tables with the Ten Commandments. God judged Israel and thousands of people died through the sword and the plague. After Moses interceded for Israel, God renewed his covenant with Israel. To this section was added Exodus 34:10-26, which consists of the so-called *cultic Ten Commandments*.

Section five. Exodus chapters 35 to 40, describes the building of the tabernacle.

The building of the tabernacle was the realisation of God’s purpose for leading Israel out of Egypt. The tabernacle was the visible sign of God’s dwelling in the midst of Israel. The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Now God was

visibly present in the midst of his people. Now Israel was ready to continue their journey to the Promised Land. The history of Israel's journey from Sinai to the borders of Israel is described in the book of Numbers.

### **POINT 3. THE MAIN CONTENTS OF EXODUS.**

#### **First. Exodus chapters 1 to 4 describe the training of God's man for God's task of redeeming God's people, who are in bondage.**

It describes the birth, adoption and early education of Moses during the first 40 years of his life. Then it describes how he kills an Egyptian, is rejected by his own people and flees to Midian, where he married and stayed for another 40 years. This was the period in which God disciplined Moses' character and began a personal relationship with Moses. Then it describes how God called him to return to Egypt to bring Israel out of their slavery.

#### **Second. Exodus chapters 5 to 18 describe the redemption of God's people from bondage.**

It describes how God triumphs over Egypt, a mighty world power, through ten plagues. This section contains *types* or *illustrations* of salvation. The Passover is an illustration of God's future work on the cross (1 Cor 5:7). The crossing of the Red Sea is an illustration of baptism with water (1 Cor 10:2). The Manna coming down from heaven is an illustration of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 10:3; Jn.6). The water from the cleft rock is an illustration of the living water that only Jesus Christ can give to people (1 Cor 10:4). And the appointment of officials over thousands, over hundreds, over fifties and over tens in order to serve as judges is an illustration of the organised community of God's people living in the world (Ex 18:17-23; Act 6:1-7).

#### **Third. Exodus chapters 19 to 31 describe the moral and ceremonial (ritual) laws of God for holy living.**

In Exodus 19:4-6 God explains that his election of Israel is for holy living. He says to Israel, "You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." The basic principles of a holy life under God's covenant are commanded in the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20. The special application of these Ten Commandments in Israel's own setting as a nation is described in the Book of the Covenant in Exodus 20:22 to 23:33, which contain holy conduct towards the neighbour and holy worship towards God. Exodus 25-31 contains instructions for the making of the tabernacle. The tabernacle contained no idols and served to preserve Israel from worshipping the idols of Canaan.

#### **Fourth. Exodus chapters 32 to 34 describe the failure of Israel and the mercy of God.**

After Israel violated this covenant by worshipping the golden calf, God renewed the covenant with them. God especially repeated and emphasised the ceremonial laws of the covenant, which served to teach Israel how to approach and worship God.

#### **Fifth. Exodus chapters 35 to 40 describe God's means of grace in order to prevent Israel from backsliding.**

God graciously provides Israel with the Sabbath and the tabernacle. God emphasises the importance of the Sabbath as a day in which Israel should rest from their daily work and seek the Lord. The tabernacle with its altars for sacrifices is God's means of forgiving sins and for preventing Israel from making and serving idols.

### **POINT 4. THE MESSIAH, JESUS CHRIST, IN THE BOOK OF EXODUS.**

#### **First. The Passover is a type of salvation through faith in the shed blood of Christ on the cross.**

The only way the Israelites could escape God's judgement through the tenth plague was by slaughtering a lamb and applying its blood to the door frames of their houses. Afterwards the Passover festival was a feast of commemoration, in which people used no blood, but only ate a festive meal together. The Passover festival was a reminder to Israel that just like creation, salvation is from beginning to end a work of God and not of man. The blood pointed forward to the blood that Jesus Christ would shed on the cross as a sacrifice of atonement for his people. John 1:29 says, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" And 1 Corinthians 5:7 says, "Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed!"

#### **Second. The feast of unleavened bread is a type of the haste with which Christians should remove sin from their lives.**

At the departure from Egypt, Israel had to eat the Passover lamb together with bread made without yeast (Ex 12:9). They had to eat it standing and in a great hurry, because they were departing from the house of enslavement to idolatry and sin. In 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 the Bible teaches that *yeast* here symbolises all kinds of sin, like for example malice and wickedness. Yeast takes time to rise and Christians should not give any place or time for sins to grow in their lives. The Bible says that Christians must "get rid of the old yeast so that they may be a new batch without yeast". Christians must celebrate their salvation by quickly and continually getting rid of their sins and by rejoicing in sincerity and in truth.

**Third. The crossing of the Red Sea, the eating of the manna and the drinking of the water from the cleft rock are types of the Christian life.**

In 1 Corinthians 10:1-3 we read, "I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all *baptised* into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all *ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink*; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ!" The apostle Paul teaches that there was a *spiritual* background to what *literally* happened to Israel. The entire nation of Israel received God's benefits. Those benefits had a spiritual character. The Source of those benefits was Jesus Christ. But verse 5 warns that we must distinguish between receiving the benefits and continuing in God's favour till the end. Verse 6-11 warns the Corinthians that all those things applied not only to Israel in the Old Testament period, but also to Christians in the New Testament period. By passing through the Red Sea, the Israelites were forever separated from their old life-style in Egypt and were joined to God's prophet, Moses. They shared in all the gifts God gave through Moses and were compelled to follow Moses to the Promised Land. Compare Christian baptism in Romans 6:1-14.

By eating the manna and drinking the water from the rock, the Israelites during the Old Testament period shared in the future salvation work of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. Compare sharing in Christ's salvation through faith in John 6:54 and 40. Baptism and faith are not magical means of receiving salvation, but both require the production of fruit in keeping with conversion (Mt 3:8).

**Fourth. The tabernacle is a type of the perfect tabernacle in heaven, where the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross made Christians perfect forever.**

Hebrews 8:5 says that the tabernacle or later the temple on earth was only "a copy and shadow" of what is in heaven. Hebrews 8:1-2 says that the true tabernacle and sanctuary of God is in heaven. It is set up by God and not by man. Hebrews 9:24-26 says that there Jesus Christ appeared in God's presence for our sakes and applies his completed work of salvation on the cross to the hearts and lives of his people on earth. Hebrews 9:11-12 says, "Christ did not enter the greater and more perfect tabernacle of heaven by means of the blood of goats and calves; but entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption." Matthew 27:51 and Hebrews 10:19-20 teach that the function of an earthly tabernacle or temple has been terminated for ever. After Christ was crucified, the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom (Mt 27:51). This symbolised that the body of Christ was broken for our sins in order to open the way for his people right into the presence of the living God! Not a single religious building in the world can bring you into the presence of God or reconcile you with God! Only Jesus Christ can reconcile you with God and bring you into a living relationship with God!

**ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. During the next week, read Leviticus 1-15. After two weeks we will introduce the book of Leviticus.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and build Christ's Church" and Internet on [www.dota.net](http://www.dota.net)

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to "Discipleship training on the air".